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THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

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"How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings" (PSALMS 36: 7).

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SACRIFICE FOR SALVATION.*

BY PRESIDENT LORENZO SNOW.

I WILL read a portion of Scripture. In the 4th chapter of the Book of Esther, beginning at the 15th verse, we read: "Then Esther bade them return Mordecai this answer. Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish. So Mordecai went his way and did according to all that Esther had commanded him."

There was a people at this time scattered throughout the provinces of the Medes and Persians, Ahasnerus being then king of Persia and Media. This people were the people of God, they had been acknowledged of God as his people for several centuries, commencing with Abraham; but in consequence of their dissipation and transgression, and because they sought to worship other gods, he scattered them throughout those one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, and they were in captivity. But in consequence of a feeling of hatred and a determination to destroy this people, they were placed in very imminent jeopardy. A decree had been passed by the king that on a certain day they should all be destroyed, and there was weeping and wailing from one end of the kingdom to the other. But it appears—as it will, and has appeared in our history in the past—that the Lord had concealed his plan for the deliverance of his people. It was for the purpose of destroying Mordecai that the decree was established. Haman, who was the author of the difficulties, had deter-

*This interesting discourse, from which we print only a part, was delivered by President Snow in the Assembly Hall, Salt Lake City, October 5th, 1882.

mined in his mind that he would destroy Mordecai, but disdained to execute his vengeance on Mordecai alone, therefore desired to make a sweeping arrangement which would include the destruction of all his people scattered throughout the provinces, and Haman succeeded in influencing the king to accomplish this business. He had informed the king that this was a people who had laws that were different from the laws of any other people, and that they were actually in some instances living in disobedience to his laws, that disobedience consisting in not worshiping the false gods that were worshiped in those days. He succeeded in blinding the mind of the king to that extent that he was given the privilege of accomplishing the destruction of thousands and tens of thousands of the people of God. On account of this Mordecai rent his clothes and put on sackcloth and sat in ashes; and finally he conceived the idea that the salvation of the people was in Queen Esther, his niece. So he advised her to the effect that it was her business to take a course to accomplish this object. But she sent back word, when she received this communication, that it was a very difficult matter for her to get an audience with the king, because according to the law it was death for any person to go into the inner court and ask for anything of the king uncalled, and if she went in it would be at the risk of her life. The answer to this was that, if she felt that under the circumstances she could not risk all she possessed, then should their deliverance arise from another source, but she and her father's house should be destroyed. Esther took all these things into consideration, and finally sent word to Mordecai in the language I have read in those verses. Accordingly after this fasting she went into the king, the desire of her heart was granted and the people were saved.

In many instances of a similar nature where the destruction of the people of God seemed imminent, and there appeared no way of escape, suddenly there arose something or another that had been prepared for their salvation to avert the impending destruction. So it has been and so it ever will be with us. Notwithstanding our difficulties may appear very great, yet there will be means provided for our escape if we ourselves perform the duties incumbent upon us as the children of God. But it may become necessary in the future—and this is the point I wish to make—for some of the saints to act the part of Esther, the queen, and be willing to sacrifice everything that is required at their hands for the purpose of working out the deliverance of the Latter-day Saints. * * *

The world thinks that the Latter-day Saints will be destroyed; they think that the Latter-day Saints will be scattered; they think that the time will come when the Latter-day Saints will be dismited and become like the sectarian world, and they have foolishly set to work to accomplish this purpose. Well, now, as

Brother Woodruff has said, we know better. We understand that this is the kingdom that was spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, that should be set up in the last days, that should be no more thrown down nor given to another people. Now, is this a fact? There are but few people who believe in these matters; there are but few people who profess to understand them. But the faithful Latter-day Saints have attained to a knowledge in these matters that is highly satisfactory: highly comforting; it is something that is of great consequence, in the position we find ourselves placed from time to time: it is something that is comforting because of the sacrifices we are required to make, and which we may be required to make of such a nature that no man could be expected to make, unless he has a perfect knowledge of what he is about. These principles have been manifested to us, and have established happiness in our hearts, and given us knowledge in reference to the outcome. We understand that the days of our probation here are but short, and that when we leave this stage of action and go into the spirit world, we have the privilege of dwelling in the presence of holy beings; and we understand fully, that as Jesus Christ dwelt here in a body, and that he received that body and now dwells in it glorified, that we are entitled to the same blessing, the same exaltation, and the same glory.

The Christian world profess to believe that Jesus rose from the dead, they profess to believe that he lives; but yet the real spirit of that belief does not amount to a very great deal. They do not believe that there are any persons living that have seen individuals that have lived upon the earth and have received their glorified bodies. John, upon the Isle of Patmos, had the privilege of beholding and conversing with an individual that had lived upon the earth and had gone back to the spirit world and received a resurrected body. He describes the glory with which that person was covered and says, "His eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters." Does anybody really believe this? There were two persons, with whom I was very well acquainted, who saw a personage of this description in the temple in Kirtland, Ohio. We are told that there appeared, standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit of that temple, our Lord and Savior, the same that the Revelator beheld, and they describe him in about the same manner. Now, I have been in the Kirtland temple and preached from the pulpit therein several times. This person stood upon the breastwork of that pulpit, and he is described as follows: "His eyes were as a flame of fire, the hair of his head was white like the pure snow, his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun, and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying, I am the first and the last, I am He who

liveth, I am He who was slain, I am your advocate with the Father. Behold your sins are forgiven you, you are clean before me, therefore lift up your heads and rejoice." I have seen Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery; they were the individuals who saw that person and conversed with him. And they also saw Moses, Elias and Elijah. Now, who believes this? What testimony has the sectarian world in regard to these things, or in regard to the gospel as preached in former days, or in regard to Jesus Christ? Have they a testimony to declare to their congregations? If so, what is the nature of their testimony? What is the nature of our testimony? It is this: That this is the dispensation of the fulness of times; that the angel that John the Revelator saw flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred and tongue and people—that that angel has made his appearance and restored the gospel to the earth, Joseph Smith being the instrument through which the restoration was effected. Joseph Smith was authorized to open up a channel and lay down a plan through which man could receive a knowledge of these things, so that we might not be left to depend upon the testimony of the Prophets, or the testimony of the ancient Apostles, or upon the testimony of the Apostles of the present day, or upon the Book of Mormon, or upon anything that was done or said in the past, but that we might know for ourselves. It is an individual knowledge. And if people in ancient times had faith, they had grounds upon which to found their faith, and so have we.

Well, what have we to fear with regard to persecution and with regard to attempts that are made to destroy the principles of Mormonism. We know they cannot be destroyed. Our enemies, if permitted, may kill the President of our Church, they may kill his Counselors and the Twelve Apostles, they may destroy the Seventies, and even the whole of the Priesthood, but the principles of Mormonism they cannot destroy. The principles of Mormonism are eternal; they emanate from the God of heaven, and never can be destroyed. When men have received a knowledge of the truth, they will bear testimony of that truth so long as they are able. Any number of decrees proscribing their actions and belief will not avail. We have an instance of this in the case of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, told in the third chapter of Daniel. These men had received knowledge from the eternal world, and they chose to worship the true God; they objected to worshiping the golden image set up by King Nebuchadnezzar. For this act of disloyalty they were brought before the king and were ordered to be cast into the fiery furnace. Even at this they were not dismayed, for said they, "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning furnace and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which

thou hast set up." They were accordingly thrown into the fiery furnace, and all the people, as it were, said, amen, let them be destroyed. But there was deliverance the moment deliverance was needed. When Nebuchadnezzar saw four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, unhurt; and the fourth like unto the Son of God—how changed was the scene! Nebuchadnezzar was converted by the power that he saw manifested, and he issued a decree, saying, "That every people, nation, and language which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill." In this way was the Lord able to touch the heart of a heathen king, and to turn the heart of a nation. And I will say to the Latter-day Saints—you may call it prophesy if you choose—that if this people will be united and will keep the commandments of God, God will turn the popular sentiment of this nation in our favor; the nation will feel disposed to bestow upon us favor instead of persecution and destruction. But it is our business to step forward as did Esther, and be willing to risk all for the salvation of the people. In undertaking her task, Esther said: "If I perish, I perish." Here is a lesson for our sisters. But the people of God will not perish. There will always be a ram caught in the thicket for their deliverance.

Now, I know of the things of which I speak. A little spiritual knowledge is a great deal better than mere opinions and notions and ideas, or even very elaborate arguments; a little spiritual knowledge is very important and of the highest consideration. We have received that knowledge, and we will stand by it, the Lord being our helper. It is now time for the Latter-day Saints to humble themselves before the Almighty, as did the people that were at the point of destruction by the decree of Ahasuerus. It is time now for the Latter-day Saints to find out wherein they have committed themselves; it is time for the Latter-day Saints to repent of their sins and follies and call upon the Almighty, that his aid may be given; that those fetters and chains that are being forged for us may fall to the ground, and that we may have the deliverance that is necessary; that we may go forward and accomplish the great work entrusted to our care.

Well, I ask God to bless the Latter-day Saints. The Lord has said, "I have decreed in my heart, that I will prove you in all things, whether you will abide in my covenant, even unto death, that you may be found worthy; for if ye will not abide in my covenant, ye are not worthy of me." We have something to live for; we have everything to die for. But there is no death in these matters. There is salvation and there is life if the people of God will keep his commandments and do that which is acceptable in his sight. It is not in the economy of the Almighty to permit his people to be destroyed. If we will do right and keep his commandments he will surely deliver us from every difficulty. Amen.

THE HABIT OF GRUMBLING.

HALF the misery and trouble experienced in this world comes from the imagination of the sufferer. There are some people on the earth who are continually grumbling, who can see nothing that suits them, who have always what they call "bad luck." If we were to believe them, they would impress us with the idea that nature has really given to them a greater share of the ills of life than to other more fortunate individuals. In a certain sense they are right; but nature has not given it to them, they have brought it upon themselves, which is the same in result. A person thus disposed will always look at the ills of life, no matter how thickly his path may be set with the pearls of peace, pleasure and good.

Give us rather the man who in all adversity can still see a glimmer of sunshine, who in the darkest night of trouble can still show you the hope that leads to day. There is but little trouble in the world except what we make. We do not mean to carry the idea that there are not times when men will be tried. Clouds will show themselves and hang darkly over the earth even if they have silvery linings. So also will the clouds of sorrow hang over men, dark hours will appear, deep troubles will come; yet in all these a bright side may be found if only search is made, and it is the man who can turn even the worst disasters to serve a cheerful disposition that will live the longest, enjoy life the most, and crown at last his efforts with brilliant victory. Hence, can we not exclaim with Douglas Jerrold:

"Were it not worse than vain to close our eyes
Unto the azure sky and golden light,
Because the tempest-cloud does sometimes rise,
And glorious day must darken into night?"

By all means enjoy life while its bright side appears, and when its hours of darkness come with its weariness, its partings, heart-aches, and woes, seek for the brightest spot and find pleasure in the search. We need not be wild and careless of the sorrows and trials of our fellow men, but it should be remembered that even as "the drying up of a single tear has more of honest fame than shedding seas of gore," so has a cheerful word, spoken with a pleasant spirit, more of soothing joy than volumes of despondent grumbling. Men should seek joy in their labors, find joy in their religion, and bring it into their homes,

"That it may wave over the children its silk-woven wing,
And dimple their cheeks like the roses of spring."

The spirit of God delights to dwell in the heart that is buoyant with hope, and men delight to be in the company of the cheerful. The grumbler and the discontented will neither merit the mercies of God nor the approbation of his fellowmen.—E. H. ANDERSON.

MINUTES OF THE NEWCASTLE CONFERENCE.

SUNDAY, May 22nd, 1921, the semi-annual Newcastle conference was held at Sunderland. It was indeed pleasant to see eight elders and two officials from Liverpool on the stand; as this is the most we have had the pleasure of having for about eight years. They were President Ernest H. Kearl, Elders Osmond C. Crowther, John Black, James T. Palmer, Robert E. Finch, Charles W. Speierman, Ralph S. Gray, Thomas V. Phillips; Elders Thomas M. Wheeler and Junius F. Wells, from the Liverpool office.

At the morning session the Sunday-schools gave a pleasing program, including the acting of the parable of the "Ten Virgins," by the South Shields' children. Elder Wells gave an interesting talk, saying that the Sunday-school here was part of the largest Sunday-school organization in existence—the Deseret Sunday-school Union. A priesthood and lady missionaries' meeting was held immediately after Sunday-school, when reports were given of the branches. It was reported that much branch teaching and many cottage-meetings had been carried on.

The afternoon service was a sacrament meeting, in which President Kearl presented the authorities of the Church. Elder Wheeler then announced President Kearl's honorable release from his missionary services to return home, and presented Elder Osmond C. Crowther as president, and Elder James T. Palmer as clerk of the Newcastle conference. He then presented the conference authorities and traveling elders' names, and they were all sustained in their positions. Brief talks on the gospel were given by Elders Kearl, Palmer, Black, Finch, and Crowther.

The evening service included speeches by Elders Speierman, Phillips, and Gray. Elder Wheeler then delivered a very interesting discourse on the effects of the gospel upon one's everyday life; bringing very forcibly to view the small things that must be put into everyday life in living it aright. Elder Wells dwelt upon the beautiful doctrine of the resurrection. He eulogized "Aunt Em's." life, and told clearly the condition and mission of all faithful Latter-day Saints, after they leave this probation. All the meetings were very well attended, considering the inconvenience of the train service and the general depression in work.

Monday, May 23rd, an elders' priesthood meeting was held in the Sunderland hall. Elder Wheeler gave many very valuable instructions to the missionaries. All the elders spoke briefly, stating that they felt well in the work, and bore strong testimonies. President Osmond C. Crowther conducted the meeting.

"IT costs far less," said Cavour, the great Italian statesman, "to give good direction to a hundred boys than to repair the ills of a single man not having the benefits of education and instruction."

THURSDAY, JUNE 2, 1921.

EDITORIAL:

WHO DIE IN THE LORD.

THERE is a saying that "dying time is all the time." It seems to be emphasized to those away from home upon missions, when word comes very frequently of the death of their kindred and friends. This is recalled by the experience of President and Sister George Albert Smith. The hand of the destroyer of human life has been laid more heavily than usual upon them in the number of their kindred so stricken, while they have been upon this mission. But a short time since we had to record the death of President Smith's mother; two of his father's sisters, a niece, the daughter of his brother, and a dear cousin have also been recently taken. Now our sympathy goes out to Sister Lucy E. W. Smith upon the death of her dear father, the news of which has just come from Salt Lake City. The following biographical sketch appeared in the *Deseret News*, May 9th:

"Wilford Woodruff, son of the late President Wilford Woodruff, died Friday, May 6th, 1921, after a brief illness incident to the infirmities of advanced years. He was born March 22, 1840, in Montrose, Iowa. His mother was Phebe W. Carter Woodruff. His early childhood was spent in and around Nauvoo, Ill. He often related incidents of Church history remembered throughout his long life. Among these was a vivid recollection of the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum. As a child he was the recipient of personal kindnesses from the prophet, and the experiences of this period left a lasting impression on his life's career. When he was six years old his parents went to Winter Quarters, where he remained with his mother, while his father made the journey across the trackless plains, with the band of pioneers who arrived in the Great Salt Lake valley, under the leadership of President Brigham Young, July 24, 1847. In 1848, while his father was filling a mission in the eastern states, he lived with his mother and other members of the family at Cambridgeport, Mass., and here he attended school. In 1849, the mission fulfilled, the family started for Utah, where they arrived October 14th, 1850. As he grew to manhood young Wilford took his part in building roads and bridges, clearing land, and assisting in whatever capacity he was called, to establish homes in the valleys of the mountains. He was advanced regularly in the priesthood from childhood. During the years 1863-1868 he filled a mission in England. He married Emily Jane Smith in October, 1867, and the same month they went on a colonizing mission to

St. Thomas, Arizona, returning to Salt Lake in 1871. They went later on a similar mission to Randolph, Rich county, Utah, returning in 1877. For many years following the dedication of the Salt Lake Temple, Elder Woodruff gave his time and attention to ordinance work within its walls, continuing in his declining years. He lived true to the religion of his father throughout his entire life. He is survived by his wife, Maria L. Woodruff, and the following children: Mrs. George Albert Smith, now in Liverpool, England, Wilford S. Woodruff, Bishop Elias S. Woodruff, business manager of *The Deseret News*, Leo E. Woodruff, Mrs. Hal W. Smith, Mrs. H. W. Hansen and Ezra M. Woodruff; and by seventeen grandchildren."

Elder Woodruff's most sacred and important labor was probably that which he performed in the House of the Lord. His father before him was an assiduous worker in the temples, performing the ordinance of baptism for the dead and other ordinances for many hundreds of men, besides his own kindred. Among these, he officiated for and on behalf of the signers of the declaration of Independence and many presidents of the United Sates who died before the gospel was revealed again and these saving ordinances could be attended to. That his eldest son should continue this work, long years after his father's death, and add enormously to it has been a most worthy achievement. No man ever had a clearer vision of the world of spirits and of the ministry of those qualified by the priesthood to labor in the spirit world than had President Woodruff. The veil obscuring them from human vision appeared to him so thin that his knowledge of their condition and occupation, of their need of vicarious work to be done on earth for their deliverance, was astonishing. He received revelations frequently of names with identifying dates of people requiring his services in the House of God, and he was most conscientiously prompt in responding to such demands upon his ministry. That he and his beloved son, who has now gone to join him, are among the most active servants of the Lord preaching the gospel to the spirits of the dead, who died without a knowledge of the truth, their whole earthly lives of devotion to like work on earth, surely indicates. Oh, the honor, the glory and eternal delight of such a ministry; to know and proclaim the principles of life and salvation on earth until old age, with its human limitations, demand a "shuffling off of this mortal coil" and releases the free spirit fully qualified and authorized to carry on the great work of redemption in the broader field of the spirit world! Could there be a fairer outlook upon the future than this? Not to those who have the living testimony that it is the true outlook, and whose lives are devoted to bearing witness thereto by word and deed. Such was the life and testimony of Elders Wilford Woodruff, father and son. Blessed be their memory for ever!

It is not therefore the part of Latter-day Saints to deeply mourn the death of their kindred who have lived faithfully and die in the faith of the gospel of Jesus Christ. They know and understand better than to do so; for the light of the gospel has revealed to them the life beyond the veil. That they feel the human sorrow of separation—the bereavement of the society of those they love—is but natural; and it is not forbidden to saints to feel the heart-ache and weep the tears of affliction when they lay away their dead. But their sorrow is not the grief of those without hope, without the consolation and comfort of an abiding faith. They have more than that, in the revealed truth that their dead, having lived here, and before they came into this life, still live; that they are not far away; that while we who survive do not see them, they see us. We know the bonds of sanctified kinship, the eternal ties of the celestial laws, which bind men and women and their children together, are not severed by the incident of death. It is because of this testimony that Latter-day Saints are able to restrain their sorrow and to say upon parting with their loved ones, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

J. F. W.

THE DIVINE HARMONY.

When the Psalmist wrote the words, "Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work" (Psalms 62: 12), he seems to have acquired a considerable knowledge of the Divine character, together with an assurance that the Divine attributes of mercy and justice were ever in perfect harmony with one another. David, like others, had had to undergo many sorrows and trials, yet he never appeared to have doubted the fact that the Divine justice was always the rule of mercy. It was this knowledge that was the very foundation of his strong faith.

St. Paul tells us that without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11: 6), therefore, as a knowledge of Him is the fundamental of all true faith, it must be the most important of all knowledge in the world; and a thoughtful writer has stated that with a knowledge of God a person was to be accounted wise, whatever other knowledge he lacked, while a person devoid of such knowledge could only be regarded as ignorant, whatever else he knew.

Such an understanding of the Divine character is necessary not only for the development of one's faith, but without it, it would be impossible to build up one's own moral qualities. Inasmuch as a true worshiper is said to become assimilated to the object of his worship, how necessary it must be for him to realize fully all the perfections that lie inherent in that object. By his very

act of adoration it is evident that a worshiper, be he Christian, pagan, or idolator, must hold the object of his devotions in the very highest reverence possible, hence he will be certain to attribute to his deity the loftiest standard of excellence of which he himself is cognizant, therefore, if that standard happens to be an unworthy one, it can only react injuriously upon his own moral character. This fact is evidenced in the degraded worship and lives of the heathen and uncivilized communities of the world.

Upon this knowledge of God depends also eternal life, for our Lord once prayed, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent" (John 17: 3). Realizing, then, the extreme importance of this knowledge, the question is how we may acquire it. We read that no man by searching can find out God (Job 11: 7); hence nothing but the self-revelations of the Almighty could possibly enlighten men as to the perfections of the Divine nature. Fortunately God has graciously made Himself known in holy writ through His inspired servants, and especially has He revealed Himself in the person of His Son our Lord, who was one with Him in every purpose, sentiment, and desire. By a study, then, of the Scriptures, both old and new, we may gain such an insight into the Divine perfections as may lead us on to the acquisition of a strong faith in God for life and salvation.

Men, we know, do not usually trust those of whose integrity they have no assurance whatever, and this same spirit of caution would seem to operate in respect to the faith that they are able to place in the Divine Being. The inscrutable trials of life, and possibly, too, as it has lately been publicly asserted, the saddening and hardening effects of the late war, have tended to the decline or destruction of the faith of some, who presumably were unable to reconcile the physical sufferings and mental anguish around them with the mercy and love of an Almighty Father, and so, unlike David of old, they lost faith in God because they had never acquired any true knowledge of the perfections of the Divine character.

By means of these self-revelations of the Almighty, we learn that He is (1) all-powerful; (2) merciful and gracious, slow to anger and of great goodness; (3) unchangeable, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; (4) perfect truth, for we read that He is not a man that should lie, neither the son of man that He should repent (Num. 23: 19); (5) no respecter of persons, accepting all who go to Him in true repentance from every nation and people that dwell upon the face of the earth; and lastly, a God of infinite love towards all His creatures (see Lectures on Faith, Doc. and Cov.). With such a character, what possible excuse can exist for witholding faith from One whose every act towards His children, however incomprehensible at present, is the out-

come of His infinite mercy and love, including even His just penalties for disobedience.

It has been said that there is perhaps no subject about which men fall into greater error than in their conception of the Divine justice. A writer describes justice as being closely associated with retribution, so much punishment for so much wrong-doing, and he adds that when men apply this notion to the dealings of God, the Divine justice is too often regarded as being pitiless and even vindictive, and so, while salvation comes to be regarded as the result of the Divine mercy, condemnation is frequently looked upon as the result of the Divine justice. No such conflict, however, could possibly exist between any of God's attributes without impairing the Divine unity, destroying all harmony, and rendering the Almighty himself little else than a self-contradiction. Faith in God for life and salvation under such circumstances would be impossible. The Divine nature is so perfect that it could never embody two contrarieties at one and the same time, therefore any notion of Divine justice which fails to fully harmonize with what we know of all God's other attributes, must be absolutely erroneous.

Sorrows and trials fall to the lot of all humanity, but they by no means always indicate the Divine displeasure, for tribulations have constantly been, and still are within the experience of many of God's most devoted servants. To suppose that providence is not just as operative in our griefs as in our joys, in prosperity as in adversity, is inaccurate. All the disciplines of life have for their ultimate object the fitting of mankind for a happy future, and what fits them for that must surely be both a blessing and a mercy, notwithstanding that they may frequently come disguised in very unwelcome forms.

It is perhaps a truism to say that if this world were the all in all of existence, afflictions and sufferings would be inexplicable, and that those who sorrow would have no sort of solace whatever; but we know that the Almighty has higher purposes in regard to mankind than pertain to this world. Life's disciplines come to us as great teachers. Without them the spiritual life would decline, and selfish loves govern us. Sorrows render us sympathetic and soften the soul, and, by weaning us from the allurements of the world, teach us the evanescent nature of all mundane things. Sorrows will cease just as soon as the purposes for which they are permitted are achieved, for we read that God never willingly afflicts or grieves the children of men (Lam. 3: 33).

According to Scripture: "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Heb. 12: 6); we also read that Jesus himself learned obedience by the things that he suffered (Heb. 5: 8), and that he was made perfect through suffering (Heb. 2: 10); how much more necessary then must it be for erring mortals like ourselves to have to undergo those disciplines

of life that alone can fit us for the Divine presence hereafter. Norman Gale writes:

"It is not well that I should move
For ever in life's easy street;
How should my feet not bleed for Love?
Love's bled for me, and Love is sweet.

I follow though the brambles tear
And though the mountain track is rough,
How should I moan a cross to bear?
Christ went this way. It is enough."

Suffering, too, is at times the result of one's own disobedience. Divine, like human justice, must always provide for the punishment of transgressors, but punishment is not an end in itself, but only a means to an end, and with God that end is always merciful. It is corrective but never vindictive, and always intended to act as a restraint to the commission of further evil, so that mercy must sometimes seem to be cruel in order to be kind.

At times, then, when we are enveloped in the dark mists of trial, let us not lose faith in the love and providence of our Heavenly Father, for the things that so bewilder us in this life will assuredly in God's own good time be made clear and intelligible to us.

The poet Robert Browning expresses this truth in his poem "La Saisiaz," as follows:

"Reap this life's success or failure! soon shall things be unperplexed,
And the right and wrong, now tangled, lie unravelled in the next."

R. M. B. T.

"UNCLE REMUS."

WHAT lover of American literature has not read the tales of "Uncle Remus," that kind, lovable, old-fashioned character created and immortalized by Joel Chandler Harris, the Georgia humorist-philosopher? What American boy or girl is there who has not found a fountain of clean, exhilarating fun in the queer exploits of Mr. Fox, Bre'er Rabbit, and the other quaint creations of this big-hearted man of letters.

The work of Joel Chandler Harris has long since won a safe place in the literature of the world. He is perhaps the one outstanding figure in Southern literature. His stories are classics. No one leaves their pages unsatisfied—they amuse, fascinate, refresh, inspire. The droll humor, the kindly philosophy, and the fine appreciation of Southern life, exhibited in his famous folk-lore tales about the woods and negroes, form a thread of never-ceasing amusement.

Harris was born at Eatonton, Georgia, December 9, 1848, and

died at his home, "The Sign of the Wrens' Nest," in Atlanta, July 3, 1918. His education was limited. He attended Eatonton Academy for several years, but left school at the age of twelve to learn the printer's trade. While thus engaged he read extensively and came into close contact with the negroes of the plantation, who filled his youthful mind with their legends and folklore. The boy at an early age displayed a highly imaginative mind. At fourteen he began writing. He was then a little, red-headed freckle-faced lad, but his work showed far more than average ability. The story of Joel's rise from printer's devil to that of journalist and author is a most absorbing one. Like most newspapermen, he drifted about the country, living the Bohemian life, perhaps unconscious of the genius lying dormant within him. He followed the newspaper game at Macon, Forsyth, New Orleans, and Savannah. In the latter city he worked on the *Daily News* for five years. A yellow fever epidemic drove the journalist to Atlanta, in 1876, which proved the turning point in his life.

If it were possible for you to look over the register of the historic old Kimball hotel—the political headquarters of Georgia—you would find, in 1876, the following entry:

J. C. Harris, wife, two sons, and a bilious nurse.

Evan P. Howell was then the editor of the *Atlanta Constitution*. The advent of Harris, in Atlanta, did not miss the eagle eye of the great editor, who, by the way, was the father of another of America's great journalists, Clarke Howell, editor of the *Constitution*. He said to Harris: "You are not going back to Savannah. You are going to stay right here and join the *Constitution* staff." And so the humorist became a member of the staff of the South's leading newspaper. His hour had arrived, and he was quick to seize it. His work won instant approval. Henry W. Grady, the illustrious writer, orator and statesman, paid him this fine tribute: "He has developed a spirit of humor, gentle, tender, sportive, that is equal to the best of Willis's and recalls Irwin and Lamb."

All the while the strange tales, myths and legends of the colored people were laid away in his storehouse of memory. Then an article appeared in *Lippincotts' Magazine*, on negro folklore. Harris now saw the literary value of this material. "This article," he once said, "gave me my cue, and the legends told by 'Uncle Remus' are the result. It was the accidental beginning of a career that has been accidental throughout. It was an accident that I wrote 'Uncle Remus,' and an accident that the stories put forth under the name struck the popular fancy." People often asked Mr. Harris how he came to originate such a quaint old character as "Uncle Remus," and he invariably replied: "He was not an invention of my own, but a human syndicate, I might say, of three or four darkies whom I had known. I just walloped them together into one person and called him 'Uncle Remus.' You must re-

member that sometimes the negro is a genuine and original philosopher."

Joel Chandler Harris was naturally of a shy, retiring disposition. It never left him. Mark Twain and Cable were anxious for him to join them in readings, but the innate bashfulness of the versatile Georgian frustrated the plan. In Twain's *Life on the Mississippi*, the meeting of the three in New Orleans is described as only Mark Twain could describe it. A warm friendship arose between Theodore Roosevelt and the author of "Uncle Remus." While Roosevelt was president, Harris, after much persuasion, visited the White House. The president's family became instantly attached to the southern humorist. The late president was a keen admirer of Harris' stories, commending them highly in some of his letters. Joel Chandler Harris also intimately knew James Whitcomb Riley. He was an enthusiastic reader of Riley's work. His best known novel, *Gabriel Tolliver*, is dedicated to Riley, that immortal bard of the plain people. The Hoosier poet visited the Harris family in the Atlanta home.

The work of Joel Chandler Harris exhibits the remarkable perfection of a hard-working artist. Clear thinking, directness, simplicity, all contribute to the fine finish of his work. As a literary artist his genius is sparkling and beautiful. He is never hurried. There is no halting. His may not be an "art for art's sake," but he nevertheless touches the feelings of man, making them pulsate with the pleasures and beauties of life. His philosophy is a philosophy of sunshine. He plays on the heartstrings, not to satisfy his art but to soothe or satisfy a drooping life. Of good writing he once wrote to his daughter, Lillian: "There are two secrets of good writing that I will whisper in your ear. One is to write about something that interests you because you know it; the other is to be familiar with and believe in the ideas you propose to write about." Harris was of a tender, sympathetic nature. He was a true lover of children. He wrote many letters to his children, letters containing much priceless philosophy flavored with delicious sallies of humor. Harris knew the negro and his thoughts and feelings better than any man of his time. That accounts for much of the success of his negro stories. His intimacy with them throughout his life provided him with an exhaustless well of knowledge from which to draw.

Like most great men, Harris was deeply religious; though his religion was not fanatical but sane and consistent. His religion sprang from the very fountains of the soul, finding outward expression in a strong, loving, Christian life. A few days before he died, Harris joined the Roman Catholic church. His daughters were educated in a convent, and his letters to them while there are real gems. Joel Chandler Harris lies buried in West View cemetery, Atlanta. He lived great and died great. Truly and

eloquently Frank L. Stanton, a living Georgia poet of worthy note, wrote of the author of "Uncle Remus,"

"He made the lowly cabin fires
Light the far windows of the world."

Lethbridge, Canada. CHARLES F. STEELE.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

Branch Conference.—May 15th, 1921, a branch conference was held at West Hartlepool. Sunday-school was taken up with a program rendered by the children. The service was devoted to "Mothers'-day" speeches. The evening service was well attended, when President Ernest H. Kearl, Elder Charles W. Speierman, and Elder Robert E. Finch addressed the meetings.

Baptisms.—For several months the elders of the Liverpool conference have been trying to get a suitable place to perform baptisms at Nelson. The prejudice of some of the town councilmen stood in the way, although certain broadminded aldermen felt that the Latter-day Saints should be allowed the privilege of worshiping God without restraint. When the Burnley baths, where we have always been welcome, were about to open, the coal strike came. The local brethren and elders found a beautiful spot out in the hills where, with a little labor, they made a nice pool. On April 23rd, 1921, with many strangers and a large group of saints present, President William J. Starkey baptized seven converts. The people present were very much impressed with the beauty and simplicity of the service. One could easily imagine the scene in Palestine when John the Baptist called the people of Judea to repentance, and they came by the hundreds to yield obedience and were buried in the waters of baptism. Confirmation took place at the Nelson meeting-room in the evening of the same day.

A baptismal service was held at the Latter-day Saints' church, Pitsmoor, Sheffield, May 8th, 1921, when Peter Hamstead was admitted into the Church and confirmed the same afternoon.

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